Meeting the Chronic Absenteeism Challenge:
Organizing for Success

Attendance Solutions Network, Webinar Series Part 3
Dr. Robert Balfanz, Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University
August 6, 2024

Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions

- Session 2 Recap

- Organizing for Success
  - Using Data
  - Student Success Teams

- Tools & Resources

- Good Strategies at Work

- Breakout Group Discussions

- Next Steps

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Attendance Solutions Network

Starting the School Year Strong: A Four-part Webinar Series

- July 23 & 25: Recordings Posted on the Webpage

- August 6: Today!

- August 13: Aligning Existing Resources & Forming Strategic Partnerships

Small Group Discussions – continue the conversation with your peers:

- August 20: 12:00-12:45 pm ET/9:00 am PT

Save the Date: Peer-to-Peer Learning Community Launches September 17th!

https://www.partnershipstudentsuccess.org/attendance-solutions-network/

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- Dr. Robert Balfanz, Director Everyone Graduates Center, School of Education, Johns Hopkins University (JHU)

Scale & Intensity Of Attendance Challenge
REQUIRES A SYSTEMIC APPROACH

1 Improvement is Possible.

2 Know Your Challenge.

3 Organize Your Response.

4 Align Your Resources.

Sessions 1 & 2 Recaps

Session 1: Building a Plan: A Comprehensive Approach

- Understanding the Challenge
- Organizing Your Response
- Gathering & Aligning Resources

Session 2: Creating a Culture of Attendance

- School Connectedness
- Family Communication & Engagement

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Using Teams with Data to Drive Attendance Improvement

Two Things to Consider

- An Attendance Team with 1 to 2 people can not address the attendance challenges of 75 or more chronically absent students

- Existing Student Support Teams are often siloed and not designed for scale and scope of student needs in pandemic impacted times

Existing Student Support Efforts Often Address Just One Dimension of Students' Holistic Needs
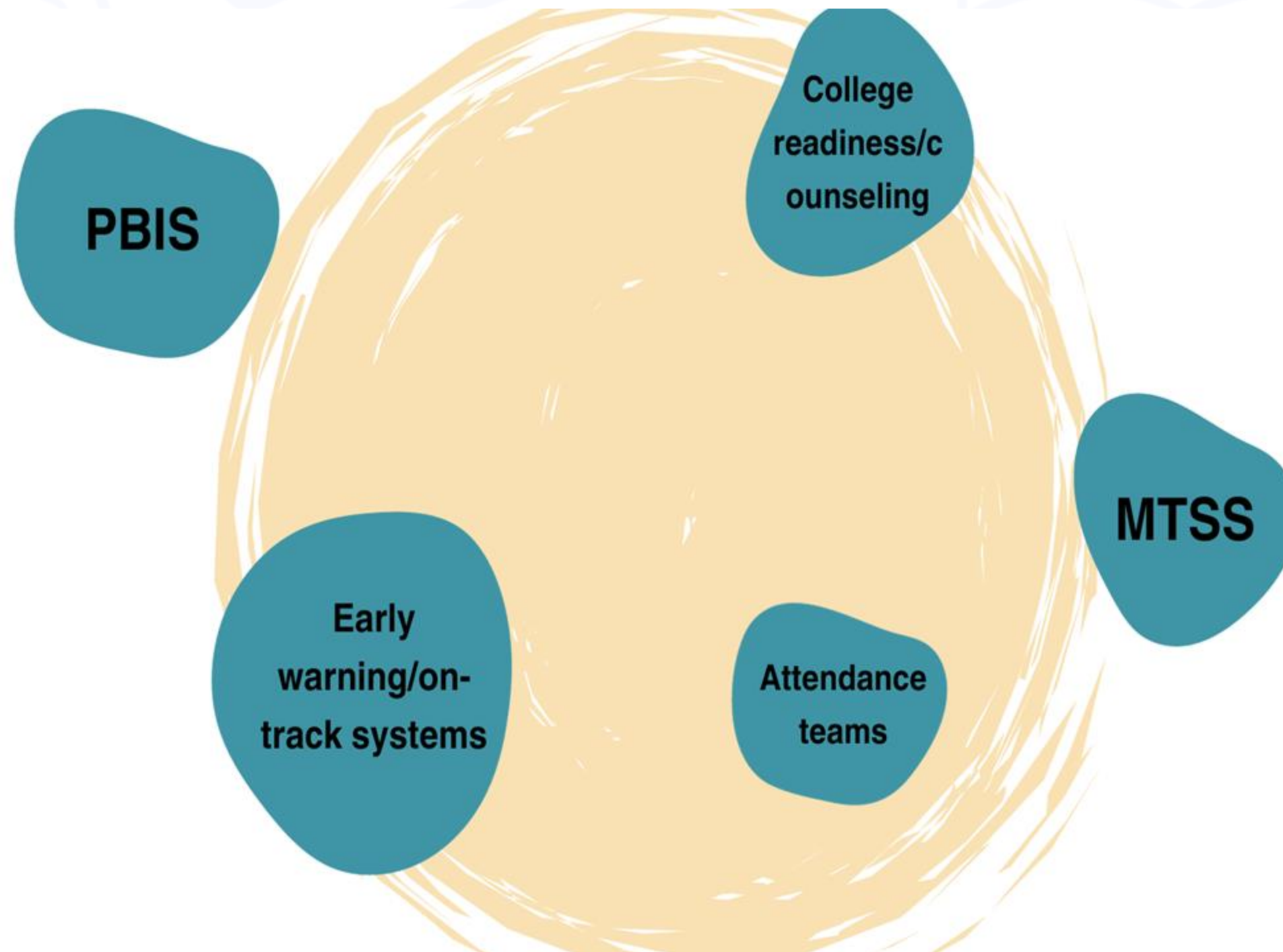
Creating School and District Attendance Teams for Post Pandemic Times

SCHOOL & DISTRICT ATTENDANCE/STUDENT SUCCESS TEAMS

- School teams should include everyone with key perspectives on student attendance-including academic (MTSS-Teachers), behavior (PBIS-counselors-administrators), well-being (social workers, community school coordinators)

- District teams should include all offices that can have impact on attendance

- Need consistent regularly scheduled time to work together, bi-weekly ideal, protocols to focus work, leadership endorsement and support

Creating School and District Attendance Teams for Post Pandemic Times cont.

SCHOOL & DISTRICT ATTENDANCE/STUDENT SUCCESS TEAMS

• Use data to shape and refine actions

• Help implement and progress monitor impact of prevention and mitigation strategies

• Engage in problem solving with understanding of root cause and input from students and families

• Seeks strategic partnership for identified needs

Attendance/Student Success Teams in Action :

- School community efforts—school leaders, teachers, and counselors
- Meet regularly
- Empowered to take action

Key predictive indicators include attendance, behavior, course grades, school connectedness (belonging), and well-being.

CREATE STUDENT SUCCESS TEAMS

PROGRESS MONITORS ALL STUDENTS WITH KEY INDICATORS

MONITORS IMPACT OF ACTIONS & MODIFIES UNTIL IT WORKS

GATHER INSIGHTS & CO-CREATES IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

The goal is to create conditions under which students thrive, rather than waiting until the challenge is more severe.

- Take action at school, grade, classroom, small group, and indvidual level
- Work with students, parents, and teachers in designing solutions

Teams with Data:

ACTIONABLE ATTENDANCE DATA

- Real time as possible—weekly at school level, monthly at district

- Disaggregated by sub-groups and grade

- Shows trends over time, from start of year and compared to prior years

- Tracks and monitors effectiveness of interventions

What Data Should We Be Looking At?

Ideally:

- Detailed attendance data
    - Days and percent of school year missed to date, excused and unexcused, can look at by month and day of the week for individual and groups of students

- Academic and behavior data

- Information about student well-being, belonging, school connectedness, and experiences in their classrooms.

- Insights from teachers, school staff, students, and families/caregivers

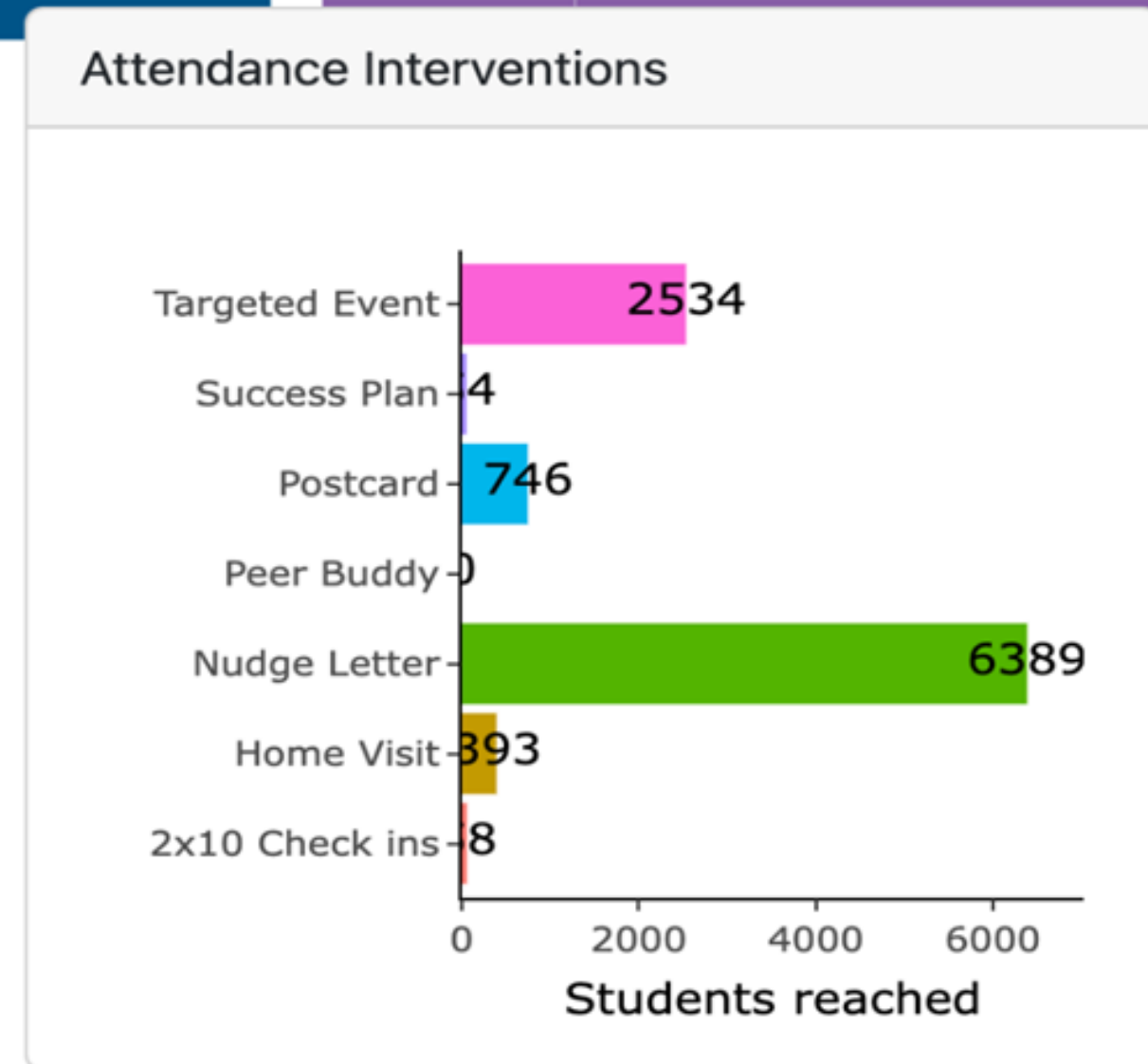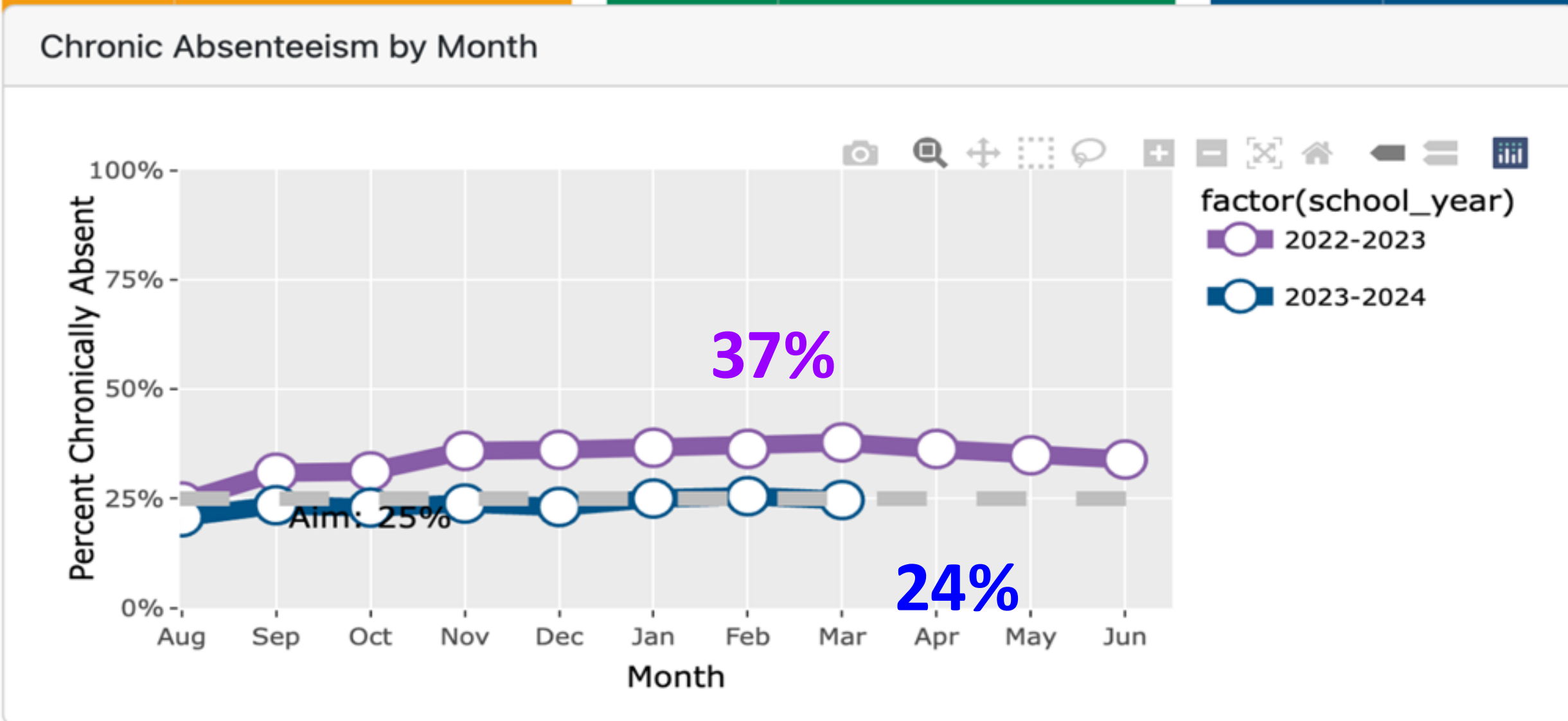NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR *Student Success*

Tools & Resources

San Diego County: ICAN Cohort 4: Current Performance

School Days
134
School Days as of 2024-03-31

Total Number of Students
10,768

Total Number of Chronically Absent Students
2,659

Missed Instructional Days
102,269

Chronic Absenteeism by Month

factor(school_year)
- 2022-2023
- 2023-2024

37%

24%

Aim: 25%

Attendance Interventions

Intervention	Students reached
Targeted Event	2534
Success Plan	4
Postcard	746
Peer Buddy	0
Nudge Letter	6389
Home Visit	393
2x10 Check ins	8

Team Meetings
397

Coaching Events
394

Year/Year Chronically Absent
-13.2%

STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM REFLECTION AND ACTION PLANNING TOOL

•Examine existing student support systems to see where improvements will have the most impact

•Aid in operating and continually improving student success teams

•Adaptable to the unique contexts of school communities

STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM REFLECTION AND PLANNING TOOL: HOLISTIC, REAL TIME, ACTIONABLE DATA

- Provides teams/schools with set of guiding questions for each component, as well as guidance on the data to examine and what to look for

- Action planning tools help schools decide what areas of existing student support systems should be improved to create a student success system

SECTION 2: HOLISTIC, REAL TIME, ACTIONABLE DATA

To be useful, data needs to be actionable. When Student Success teams have ready access to three types of data, they are most able to take informed actions. These are a) academic and well-being indicator data that reliably signal that students may need additional supports or different experiences to continue for school success and educational attainment, b) data that helps success teams understand the most effective level (school, grade, classroom, small group, individual) to respond to the indicator data, and c) insights from the people who know your students the best, fellow teachers and school staff, parents and caregivers, and students themselves.

Collectively, this data tells us the capacity of the school to consistently provide relevant, meaningful experiences that interest, satisfy, and challenge our learners. The presence of off-track indicators highlights the need to include student and community voices in the redesign of experiences, school policies, and practices.

- ❖ research-based, predictive indicators (such as, attendance, course grades, and grade point average) of key secondary student outcomes, including:
  - ✔ on-time earned grade promotion
  - ✔ high school graduation, and
  - ✔ postsecondary readiness/attainment

  which are continually available at the student and teacher level throughout the school year, in as real time as possible, and actionable by school- and district-level personnel.
- ❖ information about student well-being, belonging, school connectedness, social-emotional development, and experiences in their classrooms, and
- ❖ insights from teachers, school staff, students and families

Guiding Inquiry	Potential Data	Look Fors	Reflection
In what ways are we gathering information about student well-being, belonging, and school connectedness?	• Surveys (e.g., PERTS Learning Environments, SEARCH Developmental Relationships) • 5 Essentials • Empathy/Motivational Interviews • Focus groups • Student Shadows	• Data collection system that regularly collects data on student well-being, belonging, and school connectedness at multiple points during the school year and organizes the data in way that enables understanding of trends, patterns, and identifies who needs additional supports or different experiences	
How frequently are we able to access and analyze student and grade level attendance data? Are we able to see which students are chronically absent or trending towards it? Is it collected often enough that we can act or provide support to prevent students from becoming chronically absent? Are we	• Frequency with which we review attendance data • Extent to which we can aggregate and disaggregate it to identify patterns and trends • Interview or surveys with students to understand root causes	• Protocol for accessing, analyzing, and acting on attendance data that supports these key actions • Shared data-based understanding of what the main drivers of our students' absenteeism are	

Prepping for Breakout Groups

Select from today's two topics:

- Change your Zoom name to number 1 for a breakout group topic, "Using Data to Organize for Success"

- Change your Zoom name to number 2 for a breakout group topic, "Attendance/Student Success Teams"

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Good Strategies at Work

Naomi Tolentino Miranda

Coordinator of Student Support Programs

Attend to Achieve & Prevention Programs

Kansas City Kansans Public Schools

Kansas City Kansas Public Schools

- **Urban** public school district located in Wyandotte County (WyCo)

- Population **156,607**

- Largest school district in WyCo and the fifth largest school district in the state of Kansas with just **over 22,000 students enrolled**

- ESOL : **65 languages** spoken and represented throughout the entire district. The top five languages other than English spoken are: Spanish, Swahili, Karen, Kinyarwanda, Burmese

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KCKPS Chronic Absenteeism Data
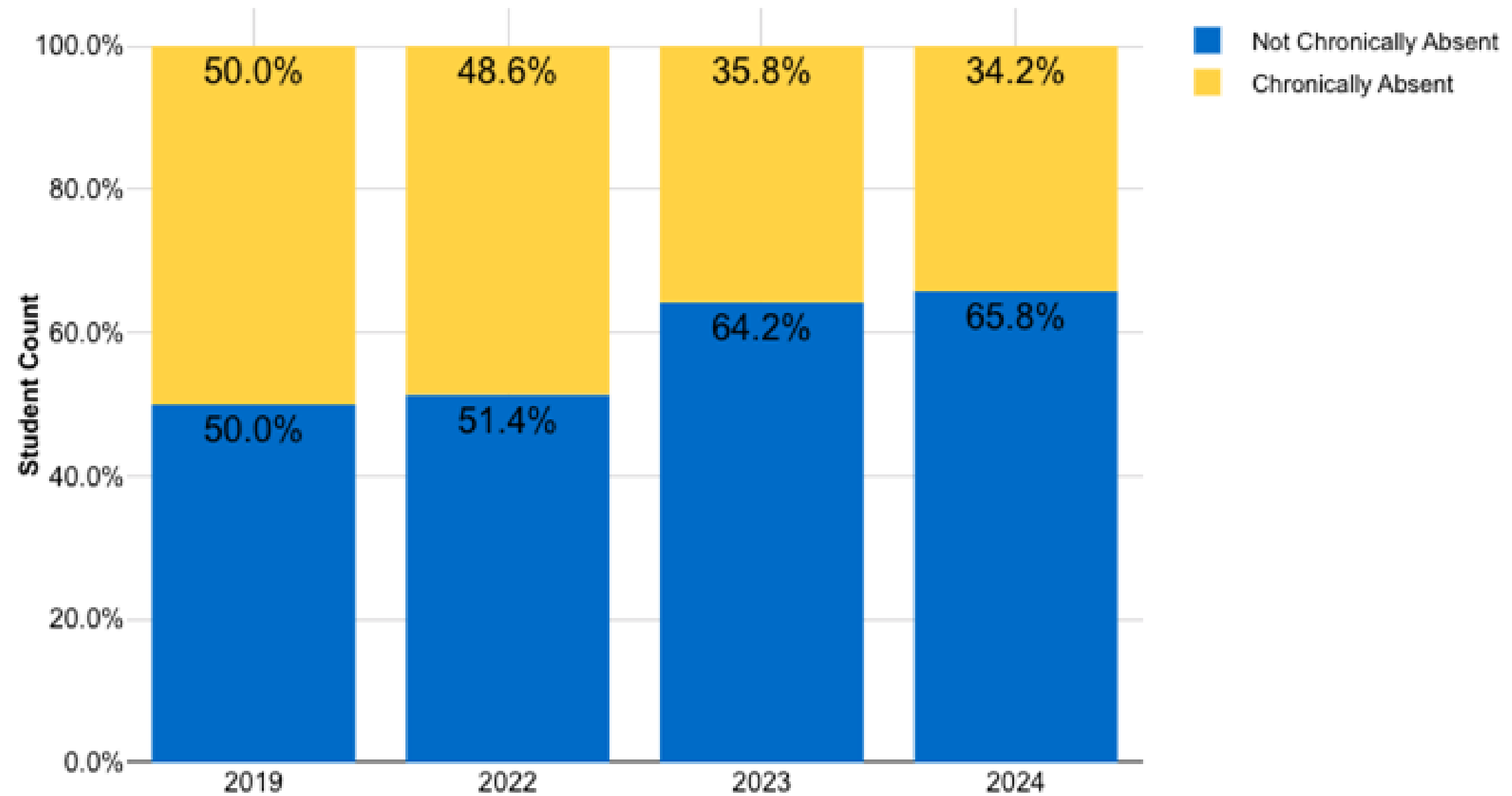
KCKPS Attend to Achieve

- KCKPS is in the third year of a multi-year partnership that began with The United Way of Greater Kansas City, Attendance Works, Red Apple EdCo, and Turn the Page KC. The goal of the partnership is to **shift KCKPS' approach to chronic absence away from a truancy model and towards an intervention and engagement model**.

- This is accomplished through <u>direct coaching, whole group trainings, and data monitoring</u>. Success is measured by improved student attendance and improved infrastructure supports.

KCKPS Attend to Achieve

- **Professional development** - for building leaders and attendance teams
- District leader **coaching** approach
- **Reorganization** of Attend to Achieve team (previously district truancy team)
- **Attendance teams** in all buildings
  - Teams receive **monthly coaching** from Attend to Achieve
    - During meetings: review data, design strategy and identify support needed to implement concepts learned
  - All teams created an **attendance plan** for 2023-24 SY outlining communication w/parents and interventions for the coming year
    - Nearly 100% of teams are requiring teachers make positive parent phone calls and log in Infinite Campus

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KCKPS Attend to Achieve

District Supports

- Development of **Attendance Data Dashboard**

- Creation of ***Attendance Guide*** for all staff

- **Monthly Professional Development** for Attendance Clerks

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John Ross

Program Manager, Placement & Appeal

San Diego Unified School District

San Diego Unified
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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- SY 2022-23: **14 Family Services Assistants (FSA) hired** to support a cluster of the 182 district schools with attendance-related issues & reduce chronic absence

- Spring 2023: San Diego County Office of Education launches *Improving Chronic Absenteeism Network* **(ICAN)**
    - Interested Schools Commit to A One Year Partnership w/SDCOE
    - Each School is Assigned a Coach Who Works with the School Attendance Team (S.A.T.) focusing on Attendance
    - Program is Only for Elementary & Middle Schools - Strategies for All Grades

- SY 2023-2024: Five Schools Participated:
    - Implemented the ICAN Strategies & Training Other Schools
    - Lessons Learned: Attendance Teams work, data critical to monitor progress, focusing on "nearly chronic" students

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- Fay Elementary Attendance Day (3 years)
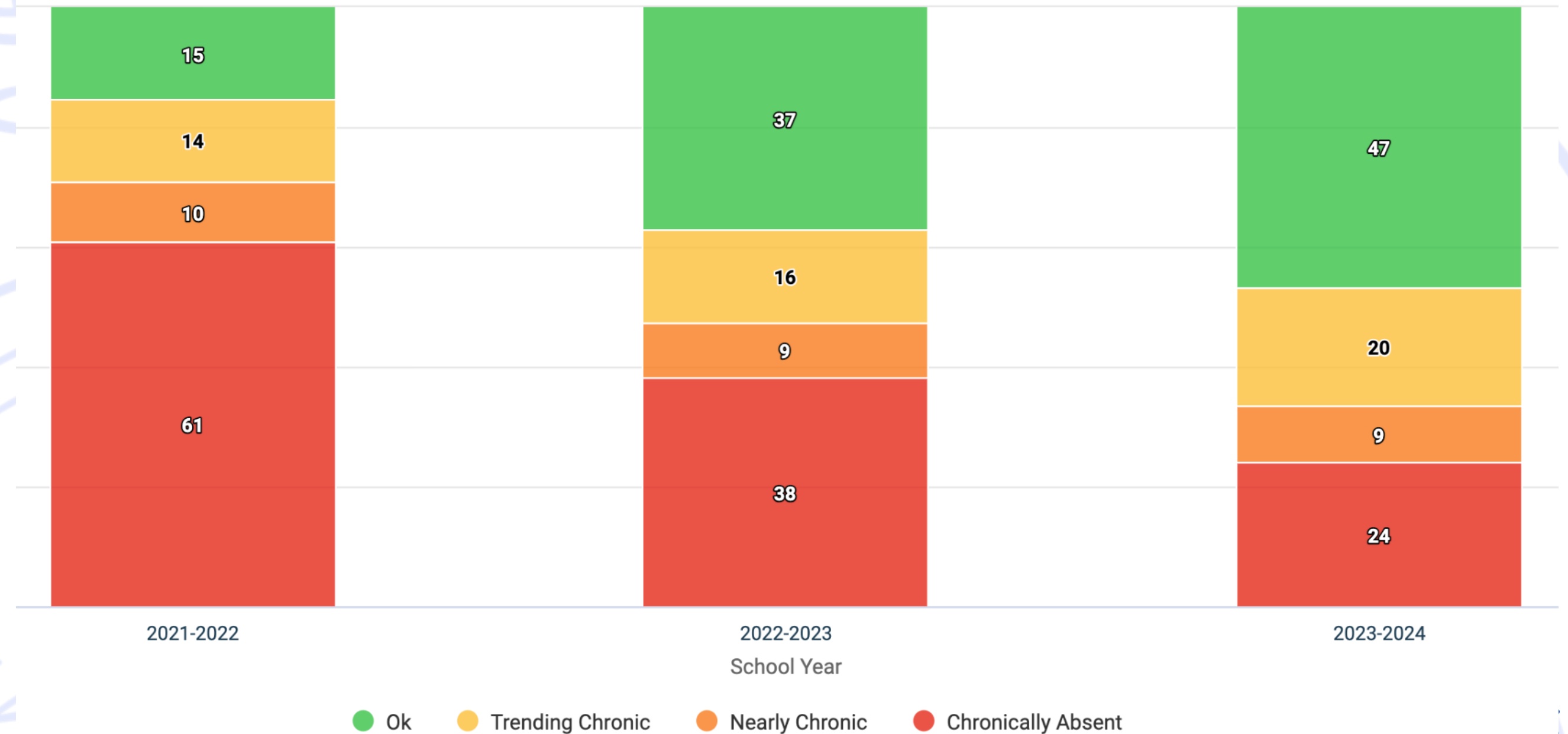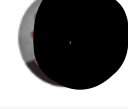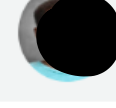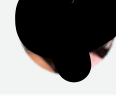
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- **Sample SIS data pull**

Hoonuit Data

Total of 102 row(s) with no row limit

☐	PHOTO ≡	STUDENT ID ≡	NAME ≡	CURRENT GRADE ≡	GENDER ≡	STATUS ≡	CHRONIC LEVEL ≡
☐				05	Male	Active	Chronically Absent
☐				04	Female	Active	Chronically Absent
☐				04	Female	Active	Chronically Absent
☐				04	Male	Active	Chronically Absent
☐				04	Male	Active	Chronically Absent
☐				03	Male	Active	Chronically Absent
☐				04	Male	Active	Chronically Absent
☐				01	Female	Active	Chronically Absent

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Goals for SY 2024-25
- Increase School Attendance Team Trainings That We Offer to 4
- Survey all 182 School Administrators to Determine Who Has a S.A.T.
- Set Goal to Increase the Number of Schools Who Have S.A.T. (based on survey)

Survey Questions:
1. Does your site have a school attendance team?
2. How often does the team meet?
3. Who are your team members? Example: teacher, admin, nurse
4. Does the team use a data tool to monitor targeted student's progress?
5. Are you interested in learning more?

Challenges:
- Getting Some Site Administrators to Make Attendance A Priority
- Not Knowing Which Sites Have a S.A.T. & Getting Each School To Implement
- Big District, but Small Group of Family Services Assistants

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Schools determine S.A.T. composition. Some ideal staff include:

- Administrator
- Teacher
- Ed Specialist/ 504 Coordinator (could be teacher above)
- Nurse / Health Technician
- Counselor
- Site Tech (or someone who can serve as the data person)
- Attendance Clerk
- School Psychologist
- Campus Supervision (or whatever staff member connects best w/kids)
- Social Worker
- Community Agency Representative

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Sample School Attendance Team Data Log

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Stu_ID	Stu_Name	Grade	Days Enrolled	Days Absent	Percent Absent	New to List	Discussion Notes	Actions / Interventions	Who
3						#DIV/0!				
4						#DIV/0!				
5						#DIV/0!				
6						#DIV/0!				
7						#DIV/0!				
8						#DIV/0!				
9						#DIV/0!				
10						#DIV/0!				
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12						#DIV/0!				
13						#DIV/0!				
14						#DIV/0!				
15						#DIV/0!				
16						#DIV/0!				
17						#DIV/0!				
18						#DIV/0!				

(Week 1 date)   (Week 2 date)   (Week 3 date)

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District Tools & Resources:

- KCKPS
  - *Attendance Guide*
  - Learning Network (Slide Deck Overview)
  - Data Protocol (adapted ATLAS) & Notetaking Tool

- San Diego Unified School District
  - Chronic Absence Attendance Log
  - Monthly Attendance Letter
  - SART/SARB & Attendance Support Protocols at Grant TK-8
  - School Attendance Teams: Tips for Effectiveness by ***Attendance Works***

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Breakout Groups

Select from today's two topics:

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Group Norms
- What's said here, stays here.
- What's learned here, leaves here.

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Next Steps

- Reminders:
  - Help spread the word!
  - Mark your calendars:
    - August 13 (Webinar 4),
    - September 17 (Peer-to-Peer Learning Community
  - Targeted internal outreach: look ahead to topics - who else from your team should join?
  - District Examples - email jenlopiccolo@jhu.edu to share a strategy
  - Today's webinar will be posted within the week - encourage district/school teams to watch

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Thank you!

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